1: Hanks E-5 (1953-1954) 1964 AO7 Central Thai AO7

597 Adoption was fairly common, though not always of lasting satisfaction. On the other hand, in this watery domain, the 842 trouble (lambāk) in raising children, mostly involving 855 ceaseless tending, was such that a childless woman was accorded a little surface envy as one who had missed or avoided a lot of trouble. The attitude towards twins was 845 ambivalent. "Twins are unlucky because there are more mouths to feed, more labour, trouble, and not enough milk. With twins, a poor family will never rise again." "No one will marry a twin for fear of begetting twins." "If twins are of a different sex, one must die." Yet others considered twins lucky "because they could be nursed at the same time, and given the same things."

855 Wealth differences also affected these attitudes, 842 especially if babies came in close succession. Comments 184 heard were: "Why do poor people have more children than the rich?" "Many visitors come bringing gifts to a rich parturient because she is respected. No one likes to talk to a poor person." "Those who have a baby oftener than every 3 years will never be rich. Fortunately, 4 of my 7 children died." The increasing cost of raising children was a concern. In one of the few families that had plans for their children's education, the father underwent a vasectomy after his 9 fine children were born, because he "feared he would not be able to feed them all." His wife, reassured that the operation had not "hurt" her husband, "was glad he had done so."

847 Abortifacients and Contraceptives

[779] Episodes concerning abortifacients were whispered about both Muslims and Buddhists. A Buddhist who induced abortion was seen as impeding an individual's rebirth and disobeying a religious prohibition on taking life, tenets which did not obtain among the Muslims. Abortifacient medicines to be used with abdomen-pressing were quietly sold by Muslims.[6] "Unmarried Muslim girls use them mostly," reported one Buddhist, "and they almost die in the process." A Buddhist curer had similar expensive medicine, but "unlike the Muslims, he will 842 not destroy the baby." Chinese boat-vendors also carried contraceptive medicines (ya) which were secretly discussed by wives. A husband reported his wife as saying, "Old ways

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6. Fraser (193) reports that in the Muslim village of Rusembilan, abortions were openly practiced, (as if part of a Muslim cultural heritage).

252 a woman's" (Sharp et al., 1953, p. 88). For instance, the
462 husband cooked when his wife was away from home, e.g. selling in the market or in farm labor, and of course when she was
252 sick or resting after childbirth. The ability of boys as well
867 as girls to cook rice and some of the accompaniments was taken for granted. A girl or boy could cook rice "as soon as he could lift the rice pot," e.g. at 6 or so; by age 12 he could cook a creditable meal. In mid-December, 1952, on the last day of school before vacation, one of us saw committees of school children (aged 7-[illegible] years) preparing food for a special meal, on the school grounds. The variety of dishes prepared and the ease with which the children went about their tasks gave evidence of the home experience these children had had
252 (Hauck, 1953). Responsibility for food preparation increased
[383] with age up to about 15 years, after which all available able-bodied family members did field work during the busy seasons (cf. p. 11). Several hours per day were spent in cooking and by middle age, parents were eager to turn this job over to a
[597] daughter or daughter-in-law. If they had no daughter, this was an explicit reason for adopting a baby girl.

252 Certain men of eminence, e.g. headmen and elders, would
554 not be asked to cook at all, but as they aged, they might re-
887 turn to the task. One old headman, all of whose children had married and left home, said that he was doing the cooking for
252 2 months because his wife had back trouble. Some dishes were
562 cooked by men only, even when their wives stood by: turtle, frog and cobra curries, for instance. These were also food for men only, suitable to serve at a drinking party.

252 A premium was put on good cooking, and certain women
261 who were noted for their cooking were in great demand for large
[868] scale food preparation during the ceremonial season. One farmer planned to send his daughter to learn from such a skilled cook, having in mind the food preparation which would be needed when his sons were old enough to be ordained. Adverse comments might be made if the food did not come up to expectation; thus, a small boy complained that his curry was "too salty," and an old woman said loudly that the curry made by her 16-year old grand-daughter was "not good," although this girl was the only one at home to cook.

Meal Patterns[1] and Preparation of Typical Thai Dishes

252 Food was commonly prepared twice a day, in the morning
264 and late afternoon. The meal pattern was the same for breakfast

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114 1. Suvarnakich (1950) described the Thai diet in a
262 general way and Sharp et al., (1953, pp. 263-274) summarized the small amount of information on diet in Bang Chan obtained during the preliminary study in 1948-49.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

the village to find dependent relatives—siblings, cousins, nephews, nieces— 596
who, unable to make a go of it elsewhere, are accepted into a relative's
family, sometimes to the extent of eventually taking over the headship of
the family. Sometimes, on the initiative and invitation of an elderly or
lonely relative, an entire nuclear family will be asked to take over or share a
household. Children of poor or "inconvenienced" families (where a new 596
child is born before the first is weaned, where there are too many children 597
for the mother to handle comfortably, where a youngster is simply being
"troublesome") are adopted or "borrowed" by other villagers for varying
periods of time. This is done preferably by relatives, sometimes by neigh-
bors, and often, in the case of boys, by the monastery, where the children
become hand-servants to the monks and are supposed to absorb, by a kind
of osmotic process, righteous ways of behaving. (Of my three male life
history informants, two were given over to relatives at the ages of two, the
third at the age of eight; one spent his childhood with four different
families, another with five families; one describes his adolescence as "wan-
dering from place to place." The psychological implications of such dis-
placement should not be underestimated.) On occasion, two independent 596
nuclear families—almost always connected by some kinship tie—will join [594]
together for convenience to share cooking facilities, in which case they
effectively become a single extended family. And in some cases, although
rare, one will encounter adult children living in independent households
but handing over their income to a parent, living in still another home, who
disburses the proceeds when necessary.

On the other side, it is common practice in Bang Chan now for a 596
husband to be away for four or five months at a time earning money in 591
Bangkok, or during the dry season on a vegetable farm, returning home to [464]
visit his wife and children whenever opportunity permits, with or without
funds. The wife may still maintain their household, but often returns to 596
live with her own parents.[7] In a similar vein, although obviously more 586
extreme, it is not unusual to find families in Bang Chan which have simply 182
"disintegrated," as the villagers say. Much depends here on the circum-
stances of family members. Bang Chaners usually reserve the term "dis-
integrated" for families that no longer have the economic wherewithal or
justification for staying together as functioning units. In these instances,
family members simply go their separate ways, if possible back to their
families of orientation or to other relatives, husbands perhaps into the
monkhood, and the children to whomever will take them. Most frequently, [578]
"disintegration" is characteristic of very poor families, and in the minds of

[7] This pattern may be related to the old *corvée* labor pattern when able-bodied [466]
village men were away from their families for extended periods of time. [651]
[174]

592 Bangchan is thus not a counterpart of the Indian or Chinese
596 extended family and should not be conceived as such. Its
621 outlook is definitely that of the nuclear family. Its assumption of an extended family structure does not indicate an intended role of the conventional extended family but does rather demonstrate the inability, temporarily at least, to provide for an establishment of a new family for the newly
[511] wed members. Most of the 80 'extended' families existing in Bangchan at the time of the second census in 1953 cannot be regarded as well to do, and some are extremely poor, being families of the laboring group without any assured regular income.

592 All of the sixteen one-man families were poor, rang-
621 ing from destitute old people who had been deserted by their kin to small farm operators who had to make the most out of their under-sized farms.

592 There were some 53 dependent relatives staying with
602 twenty-five families. These relatives do not include parents
621 of family heads and family heads' direct descendants and
[597] their spouses. They also do not include 'adopted' children of family heads, who automatically become members of the family. Records show that most dependent relatives remained in the family only for a brief period of time. Seven relatives, however, were able during the period from 1949 to 1953 to assume the headship of the families of which they had been dependent members.[7]

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7. See section on change of family heads, Chapter II.

597 621 593 As of 1953 seven adopted children were reported to be living in Bangchan. Since only those mentioned by family heads as their adopted children were so recorded and since some of the information on family members were not given directly by the family heads, it is possible that there might be some more adopted children who appeared in the 1953 census as nephews or nieces. The authenticity of the term 'adopted child' as used in the village is nevertheless rather questionable. There has never been such a practice like legal registration of adopted children in the village, although this is provided by law. Moreover, maltreatment of an adopted child was not unheard of. In 1952 one family head reported that his adopted daughter had "run away" to Bangkok. In 1953 a young widow, an adopted daughter of an operator of a coffee shop in the village, also "ran away". When her whereabouts became known, no effort was made by the foster parents to return to the woman her golden necklace valued at one thousand baht. Later she was forced back home, being beaten all the way in spite of her complaint that she was pregnant. It was also not infrequent that an adopted child left his foster parents and took residence as a dependent relative in another family in the neighborhood. Such incidents points toward the possibility of 'adopted child' being used as a nom de grace for a prospective free family laborer.

162 592 621 Table 4 shows that with the exception of the ecclesiastical family the size of families in Bangchan ranges from one to fourteen, averaging 5.7 persons per family. This

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 66]

592 a transient member of the family. This was rather unusual,
464 however. The pattern was that a transient member was
[561] accepted when he is rather young. If he was quite mature,
he might also be accepted; but the expressed motive of the
592 accepting family would then be somewhat different. When
465 approached by a mature prospective transient member, the
464 family head would most probably say that he could not afford to keep a hired laborer but he would be glad to let the man or woman stay with him as a member of the family, and that they might as well "share in the food, and share in the work".

It has been observed that transient family workers received much less from the family than the standard wage
[435] of hired laborers. While the latter received an annual wage of 1,000 baht or the crop from 5 rai, the former might be given only 50 or 100 baht a year. To farm operators of moderate or large rice farms, transient family workers were certainly an economic advantage. It was quite natural that these operators would try to keep them in the family as long as possible. Among the several methods observed were the following: (1) adoption; (2) promise to sponsor ordination of the young male transient member; and (3) giving a certain amount of lampai.

592 It was mentioned in the section on the family in
464 Chapter II that adoption as practiced in Bangchan did not
[597] involve legal registration of the adopted child, and that
[792] maltreatment of adopted children was not infrequent. To sponsor an ordination was in fact not quite as expensive